

Amendments to the Specification:

Replace the paragraphs beginning at page 2, line 25, through page 3, line 2, with the following amended paragraphs:

Fig. 1 is a representation of a ~~wild-type~~ mutant IL-15 nucleic acid sequence (SEQ ID NO:1) and the predicted amino acid sequence (SEQ ID NO:2). The wild-type codon encoding glutamine at position 149, CAG, and the wild-type codon encoding glutamine at position 156, CAA, have both been changed to GAC, which encodes aspartate. (These positions (149 and 156) correspond to positions 101 and 108, respectively, in the mature IL-15 polypeptide, which lacks a 48-amino acid signal sequence).

Fig. 2 is a representation of a ~~mutant~~ wild type IL-15 nucleic acid sequence (SEQ ID NO:3) and the predicted amino acid sequence (SEQ ID NO:4). ~~The wild-type codon encoding glutamine at position 149, CAG, and the wild-type codon encoding glutamine at position 156, CAA, have both been changed to GAC, which encodes aspartate. (These positions (149 and 156) correspond to positions 101 and 108, respectively, in the mature IL-15 polypeptide, which lacks a 48-amino acid signal sequence).~~